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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 21 March 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I would like to draw your attention to a grave act of terrorism that was perpetrated today in Israel by a Palestinian terrorist.

At 1.30 p.m. Israel time today, at a café in the heart of Tel Aviv, a suicide bomber detonated a charge he was carrying, killing himself and the people in his immediate vicinity. Three women are dead as a result of the attack, in which more than 40 others - including children - were wounded.

The terrorist organization Hamas has claimed responsibility for the attack.

A few days ago, Israeli security services warned of imminent terrorist attacks, saying that the release by the Palestinian Authority of several Hamas terrorists, including murderers, involved in attacks on Israelis, together with various incendiary statements made by Palestinian exponents, were being interpreted by terrorist organizations as giving a "green light" for the execution of terrorist attacks on Israel. Palestinian officials made no effort to counter that interpretation. The Palestinian leadership, therefore, bears the overriding responsibility for today's tragedy.

Additionally, the convening of the Security Council, the General Assembly and other international forums in which, time and again, Israel has been lambasted, contributed to an atmosphere that was further interpreted by terrorist organizations as conducive to operations against Israel.

Ibrahim Makdama, the chief of the Hamas organization's secret military wing, who was among those released recently by the Palestinian Authority, addressed a mass rally in Khan Younis today. Makdama told the assembled throng:

> "Jerusalem will not be liberated through negotiations, demonstrations, or rallies, but rather through continuous jihad [holy war], and we will continue on the path of jihad. We should not have mercy on our enemies; our people have an obligation to chase them, whether they live in Tel Aviv or in Latin America. We will make Netanyahu curse the day he was born and hope that Jerusalem will be swallowed by the sea."

Israel remains firmly convinced that Chairman Yasser Arafat has full control of the situation in the Palestinian self-rule areas, in which Hamas and other like-minded organizations are based. The Palestinian leadership has failed to make adequate efforts to prevent the activity of terrorist organizations devoted to attacks on Israel.

Israel calls upon the international community to condemn unequivocally this act of terrorism and to dedicate all its efforts to the eradication of the plague of terrorism.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as an official document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 33 and 151, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) David PELEG
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.